

Hunter 282

Chapter 282: The Power of Haven

System Announcement:

The Treasure Hunt Special Event will commence in: 23:14:53

All qualified participants will be invited at the allotted time. Those within the territory of a Pylon will be able to enter together, while any not within a Pylon's territory will enter as individuals by default.

Neil, Christen, Eleanor, Silas, and Levi were all chatting in the room, waiting for the rest to arrive. It was right next to the newly expanded City Lord's office, where a large meeting hall had been made, primarily for this day. The five of them had all gotten the notification about the Treasure Hunt along with every other D-grade in the city. Likely across the globe.

"Gotta say, Miranda ain't a slouch either," Levi commented as they chatted about the other D-grades from Haven who would join the Treasure Hunt.

"You totally got a crush on her," Christen teased at the man who had made similar comments many times before during their hunting trips.

"No, I'm simply acknowledging reality," Levi defended himself, faking offense. "By the way, you know who else is coming? Besides those randoms, that is.

The randoms, in this case, were something entirely unexpected.

Around a week before the Treasure Hunt began, D-grades had started appearing at the Fort and Haven. All of them had come for a few reasons. One of them was that they weren't sure if they could enter the Treasure Hunt without being within the area of a Pylon and had come to make sure. That reason had now been debunked, but another purpose was to hopefully enter with a stronger group and team up with others.

All the big cities wouldn't just enter with a dozen people. The party of five had spoken about how Sanctdomo, as an example, apparently had D-grades in the four digits associated with their city enter. Not all of them were members of the Holy Church, but a lot of them sure were. Independent parties who didn't want to join some powerful faction needed somewhere else to go, and it appeared that Haven became one such place. No doubt, along with a lot of other smaller settlements around the world.

So far, a bit over forty D-grades had come to Haven. That didn't sound like a lot, but it sure felt like it was, considering Haven didn't even have half that.

Haven only had their party, Lord Thayne, Miranda, Arnold, Sultan, and those two creepy women, along with one other guy who had joined a month or so ago. Phillip was one they had expected to enter too, but he wouldn't come. Christen had heard he was retiring, so that was a bit weird.

"Just those we discussed," Neil answered.

They kept chatting, only stopping when another person showed up.

“Ah, you guys and gals are already here,” Miranda said as she entered. “Good, the rest should be here within the next half an hour, then we can get started.”

Her words proved true as two men wearing medium armor and sheathed swords entered, not even a minute later. Two minutes after that, a man and two women came, and five minutes after that, Sultan arrived. The room kept filling up, and close to the half-hour mark, Lillian entered, practically dragging Arnold, who had his head down reading on his tablet.

This would ordinarily not cause much of a fuss, except... Arnold was the highest-leveled person in the room, and practically none of them knew about him. He was the kind of guy who stayed hidden away in his workshop months at a time, so only people like Sultan who had gone to sell him stuff knew the man properly.

Yet, despite quite a few with decent levels coming and Miranda herself having a respectable aura, the forty or so independent D-grades did notice an issue. Haven was weak. Their strongest party was decent, but there was another traveling party present equal to them in power. Miranda, Sultan, and Arnold were perhaps powerful in their own right, but ultimately they were outnumbered heavily.

Confusion and some discontent spread in the hall as people talked. Many had come to Haven because of rumors of the city’s power and now found themselves incredibly disappointed. Five minutes passed without anyone showing up. Ten minutes. Fifteen.

They all just talked and discussed, their voices getting louder as many stopped bothering to hide their discontentment.

“Why is Lord Thayne not here yet?” Silas asked in a low voice to his party.

"I don't know... but looking at Miranda, I am pretty sure she has something planned," Neil answered in an equally low voice.

They could only trust she had predicted this would happen and made an adequate plan. None of them except Silas and Eleanor had met the owner of the city recently, and the last time they did, he was just shopping or interrogating Sultan. They knew he was strong... but was he strong enough to handle a hall of nearly forty D-grades who had come to believe Haven wasn't all it was made out to be?

Jake put the last batch of poison in bottles as he prepared to head back. He had gone a good distance away from the city to not contaminate anything as he crafted his uncommon-rarity necrotic poisons and had now stocked up with a few dozen bottles at least. He didn't know if it was enough for the entire Treasure Hunt as he had no idea how long it would be, but he had a feeling he could just craft some more in there if it came down to it.

Through this last push for more stats, Jake had gone on a full-on crafting spree to get out as many perception elixirs as he could.

This meant Jake had consumed 22 uncommon-rarity perception elixirs and a bunch more of the common-rarity ones during this time. In the end, through consumption of perception-increasing elixirs, Jake had gained a total of +440 perception over his crafting frenzy throughout this last month. Unfortunately, that was all he had time to make enough elixirs for. Yet, he had still wanted to get as strong as possible, so he decided to just cap himself out before the Treasure Hunt.

The rest he had chosen to fill out with agility. 40 uncommon-rarity agility elixirs and 41 common-rarity elixirs had gone down his throat, and quite honestly, he was damn sick of the taste by now. He was now fully capped out at the 900 stats he could get from consumables. Additionally, he still had quite a few vitality-based elixirs left as well as plenty of agility ones. He would have to hand those out.

Finally, he had gained a single more level in his profession, bringing him to 130. He was now officially at a stage where his profession was ahead of his class again. Something the Treasure Hunt would very likely change.

For the first time in a while, Jake opened up his full status as he did a final check of everything before he headed off back to Haven and that meeting.

Status

Name: Jake Thayne

Race: [Human (D) – lvl 129]

Class: [Avaricious Arcane Hunter – lvl 129]

Profession: [Heretic-Chosen Alchemist of the Malefic Viper – lvl 130]

Health Points (HP): 29573/29580

Mana Points (MP): 39888/40812

Stamina: 20021/24870

Stats

Strength: 2050

Agility: 3711

Endurance: 2487

Vitality: 2958

Toughness: 2124

Wisdom: 3265

Intelligence: 2781

Perception: 6708

Willpower: 2814

Free points: 0

Titles:[Forerunner of the New World],[Bloodline Patriarch], [Holder of a Primordial's True Blessing], [Dungeoneer VI], [Dungeon Pioneer VI], [Legendary Prodigy],[Prodigious Slayer of the Mighty], [Kingslayer], [Nobility: Earl], [Progenitor of the 93rd Universe], [Prodigious Arcanist], [Perfect Evolution (D-grade)]

Class Skills: [Basic One-Handed Weapons (Inferior)], [Basic Twin Fang Style (Uncommon)], [Basic Shadow Vault of Umbra (Uncommon)], [Hunter's Tracking (Uncommon)], [Expert Stealth (Uncommon)], [Archery of Vast Horizons (Rare)], [Limit Break (Rare)], [Enhanced Splitting Arrow (Rare)], [Arrow of the Ambitious Hunter (Epic)], [Arcane Powershot (Epic)], [Big Game Arcane Hunter (Epic)], [Arcane Hunter's Arrows (Epic)], [Descending Dark Arcane Fang (Epic)], [One Step Mile (Ancient)], [Mark of the Avaricious Arcane Hunter (Ancient)], [Moment of the Primal Hunter (Legendary)], [Gaze of the Apex Hunter (Legendary)]

Profession Skills: [Path of the Heretic-Chosen (Unique)], [Herbology (Common)], [Brew Potion (Common)], [Alchemist's Purification (Common)], [Alchemical Flame (Common)], [Craft Elixir (Uncommon)], [Toxicology (Uncommon)], [Cultivate Toxin (Uncommon)], [Concoct Poison (Uncommon)], [Malefic Viper's Poison (Epic)], [Scales of the Malefic Viper (Ancient)], [Blood of the Malefic Viper (Ancient)], [Sagacity of the Malefic Viper (Ancient)], [Wings of the Malefic Viper (Ancient)], [Fangs of the Malefic Viper (Ancient)], [Sense of the Malefic Viper (Ancient)], [Touch of the Malefic Viper (Ancient)], [Legacy Teachings of the Heretic-Chosen Alchemist (Legendary)], [Palate of the Malefic Viper (Legendary)], [Pride of the Malefic Viper (Legendary)]

Blessing: [True Blessing of the Malefic Viper (Blessing - True)]

Race Skills:[Endless Tongues of the Myriad Races (Unique)], [Legacy of Man (Unique)], [Identify (Common)], [Thoughtful Meditation (Uncommon)], [Shroud of the Primordial (Divine)]

Bloodline:[Bloodline of the Primal Hunter (Bloodline Ability - Unique)]

Jake went over it all with a smile. His stats had grown a lot, and he felt far stronger than before. If he faced the Altmar Census Golem now, the fight would have gone far differently. Every part of him had improved, and especially his agility and perception had experienced explosive growth.

Since the time he faced the golem, he had gotten nearly two thousand more in stats from equipment, about equally as much from consumables counting all the percentage bonuses. All of this wasn't even counting the many levels.

Closing his status once more, Jake began his travel back to Haven. For once, he wasn't actually late, even if it was later than the planned time. This was all with directions from Miranda about how to approach the situation. She had informed him of the influx of D-grades and asked him one simple question:

Did he still believe he was the strongest human on Earth?

Jake had answered with: "how the hell would I know?" but made it clear he sure as hell would gladly fight anyone to find out. That was good enough for her to assign him to play that role they had decided he would play a long time ago.

He would enter as the overpowering owner of Haven that would squash any doubt about the city's power. Jake could do that, but there was one more participant in the plan. He had mentioned her to Miranda, and her participation was also just fine.

Because as Jake flew past a certain treetop, a green figure zoomed up to him and began flying beside him. Jake smiled at her when he saw her.

"Let's show them how awesome we are, eh?" Jake said with a smile to the green hawk.

"Ree!" Sylphie happily screeched as she flew beside him, easily keeping up with his speed. She had returned as agreed, and as for his requirement for her to reach 110 in eleven days?

[Sylphian Eyas – lvi 117]

Yeah, she had smashed past it. The hawk had gone in a carnage during this time, and from what Jake had seen, it was only truly now that she was in D-grade she could show her full power. It barely had to be mentioned, but she was more powerful than both her parents by now. Jake wasn't even certain if he could have handled her right after reaching D-grade. He sure as hell would be unable to do jack shit if she decided to leave.

The two of them kept flying as he soon spotted the meeting hall. "Time for the grand entrance," Jake said with a smile, Sylphie mischievously screeching in agreement.

He had wanted to show off his Pride of the Malefic Viper when other people were involved, and what was a better opportunity than this?

Neveah wasn't as vocal as the rest of her party, but she too showed discontentment on her face. They had operated out of a smaller settlement for a while as a party of D-grades but had some disagreements with the local City Lord as he began demanding a portion of all crafting materials gained during hunts. This was in their minds ludicrous, and the breaking point was when one of them acquired a spatial storage ring and was told they had to hand it over as it was a tool to conceal goods.

Sure, the City Lord of Haven hadn't done anything similar, and the city had a great location with many great hunting spots so close, but that didn't mean it was great being there. There was a general lack of high-level craftsmen, and there were long waiting times on anything from those who were competent.

But hey, at least Haven was super powerful, right? So far, it seriously didn't appear to be. They had a pretty strong but super shady merchant who was probably the city's greatest asset with his valuable materials. The temple was also decent enough, but compared to the one in Sanctdomo, it was nothing. According to what the city folk said, the sculptor wasn't even there but had been holed up for around a month now. It was ridiculous.

The City Lord also didn't appear overly strong. Sure, she was good enough, but not some dominating powerhouse. Neither was the one party that operated out of Haven. They were another case of "good but not great," and Neveah would rank their parties about equal. For reference, they were the fourth-best party in their old city, behind the three 'sponsored' parties.

Finally, there was that nerdy guy with a tablet. His level was high, the highest in the room, but he gave off the aura of a pure craftsman. He could probably do a bit of combat, but he didn't strike her as a combatant at all.

So, in conclusion? Haven was a nice enough city to live in and seemed very secure and relaxed with the forest aesthetic, but calling it a powerful city was just wrong. She had heard that the reason why Sanctdomo – the closest other Pylon – hadn't come to claim Haven was due to the owner of the city.

The thing was... Neveah couldn't see that making much sense. She and her party were aware of extremely powerful people. They had seen the premier party of Sanctdomo, which consisted of five absolute monsters, every single one of them likely able to take down their entire party. So she got how a single person could be strong...

But strong to cause the 40 D-grades in the room to be careful, or even beat them all alone? Yeah, no, that wasn't something feasib-

"Huh?" she exclaimed as she suddenly got the chills. No one even noticed it as they felt it a fraction of a second later. Power descended upon the entire hall as if an invisible pressure held them all down. Neveah felt like she was being watched by some powerful beast, and she drew her weapon without even thinking. She wasn't the only one either, as nearly every single D-grade not associated with Haven did the same.

Why are they not doing anything? she asked herself, looking at the residents of the city. An answer she got right after.

The door to the hall opened, and in walked a single figure. The air appeared to vibrate around the creature. The entire body was covered in dark clothes, and a mask covered the face with only two beastly yellow eyes peering out. She was unsure if the being was a human or not, and Identify...

[?]

Identify did nothing. She only noticed a second later that perched on the figure's shoulder was a small hawk. It was green and looked a bit otherworldly to her eyes, and when she used Identify on the hawk...

[?]

She got the exact same response. When she identified the hawk, it looked her way and did what she could only interpret as a scoff. Neveah didn't dare say anything as her entire body was frozen. No one dared attack this newcomer. Everyone with even the faintest ability to judge the power of a person based on their presence was acutely aware.

This person could kill every single D-grade present in the room.

Miranda stood up on the small podium. The entire hall was blanketed in a presence that even sent a faint chill down her back, and that was her being used to him. She looked below and saw all the independents stand frozen, some of them even glancing around covertly for potential methods of escape. They were scared shitless.

Now, she knew that she had asked Jake to come in with a show of force and establish some dominance. She could own up to that.

But how the hell could she have predicted he was going to come in with a presence like that?